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Westly: Governor's Line Item Vetoes Wrong for California

SACRAMENTO – State Controller Steve Westly today criticized several of Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's line item vetoes as misdirected cuts to cost-effective programs.

"At a time when California needs every dollar available, the governor cut programs that pay for themselves and bring in new revenue," Controller Westly said. "Instead, the governor wants to spend this money on an expensive special election."

Governor Schwarzenegger vetoed \$1.2 million for 14 investigators requested by the Franchise Tax Board. The FTB maintains the 14 investigators could have collected \$2.5 million in the current fiscal year, and an additional \$4 million the following fiscal year.

"He's trying to let tax cheats off the hook," Westly said. "There are 10,000 cases of individuals and businesses cheating the system, while thousands of honest Californians foot the bill.

"Under my leadership, criminal prosecution of tax cheats is up 150 percent. Now, the governor wants to tie my hands in bringing needed money to the state."

The governor also reduced the amount of money local government agencies would receive to mitigate the impacts associated with tribal gaming casinos, including a variety of public safety measures. He did so while claiming that local government agencies had not provided the proper documentation to the legislature as required by law.

However, the State Controller's Office confirms at least 16 counties representing \$22.2 million out of \$25 million submitted the required documentation to the legislature as required by **SB 621 (Chapter 858, Statute of 2003)**.

Controller Westly also questioned some of the governor's other cuts, including:

- \$20 million for children learning English
- \$5 million to hire 40 new game wardens
- \$3 million dollars for prostate cancer treatment for low-income Californians

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